

The Culture of Shame And The Shame of the Cross



Message delivered at Pentecostal Church, Itarsi. Tuesday, March 16, 2010.

TEXT

"looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." Hebrew 12:2

He despised the shame....

The consciousness of shame that the world has is warped, distorted, confused; its values are determined by the shame culture.

Luke 16:15: "what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God."

Note: It says "abomination in the sight of God", NIV - "detestable": it denotes the extent to which man's system of beliefs, world-view, is opposed to the mind of God.

The Evil Spring: Autonomous Heart:

"Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name when they saw the signs which He did. But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all men, and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man." John 2:23-25

"Then the Pharisees and scribes asked Him, Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat loaves with unwashed hands? But He answered and said to them, Well has Isaiah prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, "This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. However, they worship Me in vain, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men, the dippings of pots and cups. And many other such things you do." Mark 7:5-8

THE COVER

Genesis 3:7: "Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings." (NKJV)

Sin brought in immediately a warped world-perspective. Sin creates its own world-frame, world-system, mind-set, in which sinful concepts steeped in godlessness have perfect meaning. The shame is felt; but the covering is made to hide it. Shame is symbolic of the warpiness into which the soul of man has fallen, without any hope. There are 3 ways in which the world tries to cure it by itself:

The autonomy of deciding for self what is good or evil.

A. Intellectual Games - World-views that have inbuilt coherence, absolutes, and grids of meaning: Religions, Cultures, Traditions, Philosophies - They look self-sufficient and have little or no place for God, the Cross, and for Jesus Christ. Culture is not Christian. Human culture sprang from Edenic cover-attempts.

One loses one's mind in the intellectual soup of world-meanings. Glory, Virtue, and Wisdom is warped - Maya (Delusion) is just this nothing else: A world created within the minds of humans, having nothing to do with and separated from Reality.

B. Indulgent Follies - The world of pleasure, indulgence, intoxication, mindlessness, drugs, mysticism, irrationality; like the swine that forgets the world around when its nose is sunk in the gutter.

C: Nihilism. Nonsense. Absurdity. Suicide.

Layers of covers intensify and make intricately complex the framework and false world that grows around imagination: the simplicity of the child is long lost.

No wonder Christ talked about being "born-again" and the Scripture talks about "renewing the mind"

THE VEIL

The Blockade. The Obstruction.

A. The Veil over the Mind - Enmity with God.

Colossians 1:21: "alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works"

B. The Veil over the Heart - Estrangement from God

Mark 7:6: " "This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me."

C. The Veil over the Understanding - Darkness

2Corinthians 3:14-16: "But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the veil is taken away in Christ. But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart. Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away."

THE CROSS

Through Shame. Beyond Shame.

Hebrews 10:19,20: Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh.

He gave His body to be ripped open, violated, mutilated, and torn on the cross...
By His stripes we are healed. His cross pierces through our false worlds, shattering them, reconciling us to the Reality of God. "You shall know the Truth and the Truth shall set you free". He is the Truth, the Way, the Life.

He was broken like the bread He broke in His New Covenant, to give us life.
He despised the shame, for the shame and shamelessness of culture are false having their springs in sin.

No movie or picture can ever repeat that scene of triumph, where sin was scorched on the cross, man's wisdom was invalidated by the reality of divine justice and salvation, and heaven and earth bridged through the body of the blessed Lord.

Therefore, He doesn't condemn. He gives confidence.



John 21:

Jesus met the disciples while they had gone into the world of human endeavor out of the sense of failure (false).

Peter, when he knew it was the Lord, wrapped a cloth around and jumped into water for he was naked. When he came to Jesus, He only asked him one thing: "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love me more than these?"

That is reality. Everything else that doesn't center on this is false. Every world-system, idea of the "real life", and feeling that can do without Christ is the fruit of living in a world-system founded on wickedness.

Through His cross, that stigma of the world, the Christian is crucified to the world and the world to the Christian. This is freedom. This is truth. This is redemption. This is love.

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